

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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DVORAK BILL CREATES MORE PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

INDIANAPOLIS- Victims of crime will be able to attend court proceedings and meet with law enforcement without fear of losing their jobs under legislation authored by State Rep. Ryan Dvorak (D-South Bend) that is under consideration in the Indiana General Assembly.

“Victims of crime often have difficulties getting time off to attend court proceedings,” Dvorak said. “Participating in the legal process and conferences with law enforcement helps make the victim a part of resolving the crime that was committed against them.”

House Bill 1185, which has been assigned to the House Employment and Labor Committee, would allow victims to use their vacation or sick days, or take unpaid time to attend official proceedings. To receive the time off, a victim would provide their employer with copies of the scheduled court proceedings.

“Rep. Dvorak’s legislation would be a tremendous help to crime victims by providing them the right to attend court proceedings and confer with prosecutors without risking their jobs or having a negative impact on their employment records,” Susan Grant, Director of National Fraud Information Center stated.

Anita Carpenter, Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault stated, “I am pleased to see a bill regarding employees’ rights for victims that extends to victims of all types of violent crime. No employee should be penalized as a result of being victimized.”

“A victim should not have to make a choice between maintaining gainful employment and holding her abuser accountable for his or her actions,” said Linda Baechle, Executive Director of the YWCA of St. Joseph County. “This legislation is very important to protect victims and ensure that they have access to legal recourse and protection.”

Many organizations have lent support to this bill. They include: the National Center for Victims of Crime, National Consumers League, Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault (INCASA), After the Crime Programs of St. Joseph County, United Religious Community of St. Joseph County, Rape Crisis Center of St. Joseph County, and the YWCA of St. Joseph County.